

# SPARK

Newsletter of the City of San Antonio **Office of Cultural Affairs**

## OCA's Mission

To provide leadership, resources and support for arts and cultural organizations and individual artists, enhancing the quality of life for San Antonio Citizens and visitors.

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## OCA Staffer Reports from the National Black Arts Festival

Danita Nelson, Public Information Officer for the Office of Cultural Affairs, attended the 2005 National Black Arts Festival (NBAF) in Atlanta in July with support from OCA and a Texas Commission on the Arts Cultural Connections grant.



In addition to the article below, you can read her blog written on the scene by going to [www.b1604.com/nelsonblog/index.htm](http://www.b1604.com/nelsonblog/index.htm).

The 2005 NBAF in Atlanta promised to celebrate the creative continuum—Generation to Generation: Master–Mentor–Muse, from July 15–24. Counted among the young-at-heart experiencing legacies of the Masters and energy of emerging artists, I crammed as much dance, film, music, literature, theater and the visual arts possible into a six -day, five-night visit. The Festival kept its promise and delivered a feast of creativity certain to inspire.

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The Living Legends performance featured The Neville Brothers (Art, Charles, Aaron, and Cyril)— with their sons and Odetta – demonstrating creative dialogue between generations. Other luminaries providing Festival highlights include Nikki Giovanni, Ronald K. Brown, Pearl Cleage, Maya Angelou with her son Guy Johnson, Will Power and Sam Gilliam. The Pan African Film Festival, held in conjunction with NBAF, screened domestic and foreign feature-length and short cinema; opening night involved conversation with father-son filmmakers Melvin and Mario Van Peebles. Four gallery crawls incorporated stops at museums, galleries, studies, and private collections. The closing event at the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church presented the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in concert. And that's just the highlights!

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## Fall Art Festivals 2005 Campaign in Action

If you've flown on Southwest Airlines in August or subscribe to Texas Highways, you may have noticed that it's Fall Art Festival (FAF) time again in San Antonio. FAF began last year when five unique annual festivals partnered with the Office of Cultural Affairs to promote the autumn months of September, October and November as special times to visit San Antonio because of the cultural activity going on during that time. The advertising that OCA purchases invites the reader to go to a web site [www.fallartfestivals.com](http://www.fallartfestivals.com) to get information about these events. The partners for 2005 are: FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA (August 28–September 30); Jazz'SAlive (September 17 & 18); International Accordion Festival (October 15 & 16); Día de los Muertos (October 28–November 20); and the New World Wine and Food Festival (November 1–6). This year Cinefestival, the 28-year old film festival at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, changed its dates from August to November 11–19, but too late to be incorporated into the Fall Art Festivals material for 2005. If they keep the November date for 2006, they will be eligible to be included as a sixth event as they meet all the criteria set out for partners.

## Murals Continue to Fight Graffiti

OCA's mural assistance program staffed by Anastacio "Tache" Torres and Juan Hernandez keeps on waging the battle against graffiti by assisting different groups in design and painting of murals on buildings in their communities.

"Education" was the subject of a mural painted by volunteers from Trinity University on April 9 at South Zarzamora and Pyron. The Trinity students were assisted by staff from OCA and Neighborhood Action Department.

On April 23 the District 7 field office staff was joined by OCA staff and a group of Boy Scouts to paint a mural on Ray Ellison Drive.

OCA's staff did a presentation on May 16 to participants of the Old Pearsall Road Community Center and helped them with the design of a mural that they will paint in the near future.



## TCC Adopted by City Council

The Cultural Collaborative: A Plan for San Antonio's Creative Economy (TCC) was formally and unanimously adopted by City Council on Thursday, June 9th. Implementation of the strategies outlined in the plan will begin this Fall. An implementation committee is being formed to guide this process. The City's proposed budget for 2005-2006 includes a one-time improvement of \$500,000 for TCC. The budget will be voted on September 15th. The full plan can be accessed and downloaded on the web at [www.sanantonio.gov/tcc](http://www.sanantonio.gov/tcc). Broadly stated budgetary needs are listed in the report.

With the exception of the Economic Impact Study, which was completed and officially released on June 8th, strategies have not been funded at this point. The report also lists community partners and allocates responsibilities for implementing the different strategies.

Over 1,000 people were involved in generating TCC, but OCA wants the word to be spread even further. Groups wishing to have a luncheon or meeting presentation made about the TCC can contact OCA's Public Information Officer, Danita Nelson, at (210) 207-6960 or [dnelson@sanantonio.gov](mailto:dnelson@sanantonio.gov) to arrange for a speaker to attend your meeting.



## OCA Staffer Reports from the National Black Arts Festival

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The experience lent opportunity for some on-the-job training related to audience development, sponsor relationships and media coordination while observing the work of Festival organizers and their public relations consultants from Edelman. Look for work, in San Antonio, by Roy Lagrone, Wendy Phillips and Isolde Brielmaier – all contacts made possible by NBAF attendance. I owe special thanks to photojournalist Jim Alexander for providing insight and great reference to Atlanta cultural, creative and political structure.

The Festival is an annual event, well worth the investment for anyone to indulge. Next year's theme will explore parallels in cultural development between the American (United States) South and South Africa.



## Cultural Arts Board Members Needed

Cultural Arts Board members are volunteers appointed by City Council to represent each district. One additional member is appointed by the Mayor. The Cultural Arts Board determines funding policy and reviews grants recommendations before they are sent to City Council for approval. The Cultural Arts Board has four standing committees (executive, grants, marketing and neighborhood arts) and meets the fourth Tuesday of every month in open session. Currently there are vacancies in Districts 4, 5 and 9.

Persons knowledgeable in the arts, living in either of these three districts, and interested in serving on the Cultural Arts Board should contact Felix Padrón, Director at (210) 207-6967 or [fpadron@sanantonio.gov](mailto:fpadron@sanantonio.gov) for more details. Appointments will be made by Councilman Richard Perez for District 4, Councilwoman Patti Radle for District 5 and Councilman Kevin Wolff for District 9. Appointees serve 2 year terms with option for renewal.

## Neighborhood Arts Programs have Varied Faces

Neighborhood Arts Program grants go to arts or community organizations to provide arts services to communities that are also open to the public and visitors. Recent activities include the following:

**Birds in Flight: Eagles to the East**—This past July CERA (Community Economic Revitalization Agency), the agency responsible for three Eastside NCR Districts, partnered with printmaking artist Le Green to create a public art project more than 2 miles in length. Birds in Flight – Eagles to the East used graphic images of eagles in different stages of flight, to enliven the inner city space with thought provoking metaphors, endorse a message of positive change and encourage economic, social and personal metamorphoses. Green's artwork was emblazoned on silk screen lamp post banners throughout the three Eastside NCR Districts. Other site specific works were placed on 11 outdoor billboards where they will remain until new advertising is purchased for those locations.

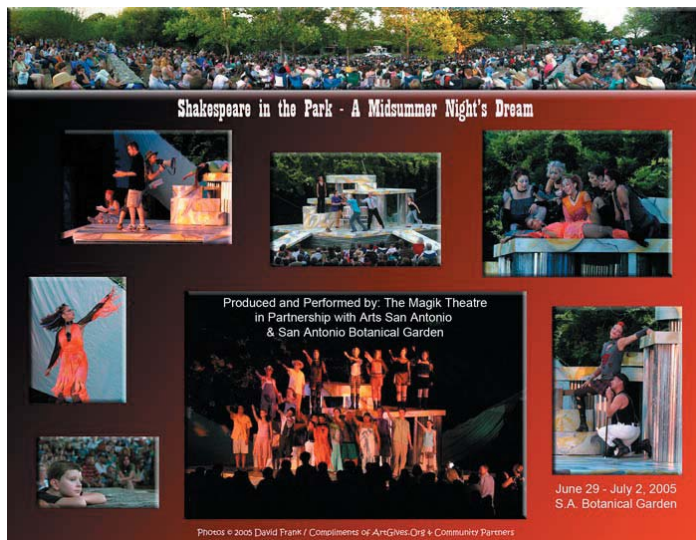
**Shakespeare in the Park**—Magik Children's Theatre and Arts San Antonio combined forces to mount an all local production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare in the San Antonio Botanical Garden Amphitheatre June 29 – July 2. Both Richard Rosen, Director of Magik and Frank Villani, Director of Arts San Antonio were pleased with the collaboration and the response from the audience. "We were hoping for @ 1,200 people/night," said Rosen "but we wound up with total attendance of nearly 7,000. The last night we had 2,200 people in the audience."

Five hundred random surveys gave a glimpse of the audience. 12-13% were out-of-town visitors. There were lots of families attending. 26% were 18 or under. 20% had never been to the Botanical Gardens before and others had been to the gardens but never seen a production of Shakespeare. "This was a win-win-win for us, for Magik, and for the Botanical Gardens," said Frank Villani. "We're looking forward to doing it again next summer."

**Save the Music Program**—San Antonio Youth Centers, Inc., in partnership with Alamo Music Center and St. Mary's University conducted weekly music lessons in a year round music program that teaches low-income inner-city youth from the Alazan Apache and Lincoln Housing Developments valuable music skills and music appreciation. The program showcases the skills of these youth during three (3) public performances per year.

**Project Discover**—SAY Si worked closely with the San Antonio Housing Authority to provide weekly art sessions to children residing in the Lincoln Heights complex. These workshops provided opportunities for these students to receive mentoring from SAY Si's alumni college instructors while developing artistic and social skills.

**Free Summer Community Chamber Music Concert**—Cactus Pear Music Festival held a concert at Por Vida Academy for an audience composed of at-risk youth, including participants in the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program, the Bexar County Day Treatment Program and Por Vida's Parents' Academy.



## Cultural Arts Board Members

(as of April 2005)

Mayor's Appointee	Ana Maria Martinez
District 1	Bettie Ward
District 2	Antoinette V. Franklin
District 3	Andrew Anguiano
District 4	VACANT
District 5	VACANT
District 6	Ruby Perez (Chair)
District 7	Patricia Pratchett
District 8	Woodruff Halsey (Vice-Chair)
District 9	VACANT
District 10	Meredith Coppolo

## Local Creative Industry Economic Impact Report Available

"The Economic Impact of San Antonio's Creative Industry" was officially released at a press conference on Wednesday, June 8th co-hosted by The Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, the San Antonio Economic Development Department and the Office of Cultural Affairs. Study highlights show the creative industry to have an economic impact of more than \$1.2 billion on the San Antonio economy. It paid over \$319 million in wages to 11,888 employees and generated more than \$2.2 million in local sales taxes. These figures are quite conservative and do not include most individual artists.



Copies of the 20 page pamphlet detailing the study's results can be requested from Ava Lambert, Arts Program Coordinator, at (210) 207- 5798 or [alambert@sanantonio.gov](mailto:alambert@sanantonio.gov). Groups requesting a presentation about the Economic Impact study at a luncheon or regular meeting can contact Danita Nelson, Public Information Officer, at (210) 207-6960 or [dnelson@sanantonio.gov](mailto:dnelson@sanantonio.gov).

## New OCA Part-Timer Keeps Cultural Web Current



San Antonio arts organizations with questions about getting their events listed on OCA's calendar have probably already communicated with the newest member of our staff, Diana Roberts. Many people know Diana from her years as director of the Center for Spirituality and the Arts. When the Center closed recently, Diana was left with a lot of free time that coincided with OCA's search for a part-time person to work on the Cultural Web. The Cultural Web is set up to allow organizations to enter information about their events at [www.sanantoniovisit.com/visitors/eventinput.asp](http://www.sanantoniovisit.com/visitors/eventinput.asp). Entering your event on this form will also post it to the Convention and Visitor's web site as well as the main calendar for the City's web site. The Cultural Web can be found at [www.sanantonio.gov/art/website/calendar.asp](http://www.sanantonio.gov/art/website/calendar.asp).

One of Diana's jobs is to review that information and contact the organization if there is anything that is unclear. She can also answer any questions the organization may have about how the form works.

Diana's usual schedule is all day Tuesday and Thursday and half a day (usually mornings) on Wednesday. Her phone number is 207-6963 and her email is [droberts@sanantonio.gov](mailto:droberts@sanantonio.gov).

## Neighborhood Arts Programs have Varied Faces

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**Art Education Program** —Conducted at Madonna Center on Saturday mornings from 10 am to 2 pm. Children, ages 8–14 years, who live in the neighborhood, are recruited from the Center and neighboring schools to participate. The program is presented in four, 8 week sessions each year. Participants select arts or cultural subjects of interest to them and services are contracted from local arts organizations.

**Art A la Carte** —Hidden Forest Elementary PTA and local artists provided a day-long, school-wide event that promoted art appreciation and learning through hands-on creative activities and professional artist demonstrations.

